

Third Annual Quality Improvement Committee Summit

November 25, 2008

Welcome

Kerri Burns

This is the Third Annual Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) Summit. Kerri welcomed everyone to this exciting event and explained what we will be accomplishing today.

Keynote

Duane Betournay

Duane explained the day's format, and invited the participants to join the open forum and ask questions or provide input at any time. He gave an overview of the vision and history of the QICs. Duane talked about the successes and struggles of the current QICs. Other items discussed included:

- *Current economy and budget cuts. Duane gave an outline of the budget cut scenarios prepared by the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) for the Legislative Special Session, the philosophy of cutting administrative costs whenever possible, and the strategies to avoid cutting services to families. Additional budget cuts are expected, and will likely affect all state agencies. Lisa-Michele Church and Governor Huntsman have committed to make every effort to protect programs for children and families in Utah.*
- *Legislative items. Representative Trisha Beck was congratulated on her reelection. Budget issues will most likely be the pressing issue of the upcoming legislative session. The following bills have been prepared to date: runaway or homeless youth; language clean-up of FCCRB; state statute to address the new federal bill for fostering connections; and SAFE database changes.*
- *David C. lawsuit. The court monitor has issued its Sustainability Report (available on the DCFS [Transition from Court Oversight](#) web page), and we hope that, based on the mostly positive report, the exit is still on track. A meeting will be held with plaintiffs' attorneys to address their concerns. After that meeting, the plaintiffs can file a motion with the federal court to stop the exit and bring their concerns forward as to why DCFS should not exit the lawsuit. The plaintiff and monitor both expressed concerns in the following areas: training, resources, caseloads, and the QICs varied levels of functioning. Once we know the outcome of the meeting, DCFS will post the information on their website. Susan Eisenman stressed that the court monitor found that DCFS has sustained the successes that resulted in the exit agreement, and they are recommending that DCFS exit the lawsuit. Citizen involvement and the QICs are very critical now because of budget concerns. Once DCFS has exited the lawsuit, the QICs will essentially assume the court monitor's role.*
- *Other major accomplishments: The Case Process Review (CPR) for this year was very favorable, and DCFS put together a plan for those areas where there were concerns; Brad McGarry explained how we are sharing our successes around healthcare of children in care with other states; the Qualitative Care Reviews (QCRs) are looking very good this year, with Salt Lake Valley Region passing this round of reviews; in the last round of QCRs, Southwest*

Region entered into a Marked Decline Plan and succeeded at that plan, and Eastern Region entered into its Marked Decline Plan and continues to work toward exiting that plan; DCFS exited its Program Improvement Plan (PIP) from the Federal Child and Federal Services Review (CFSR); and DCFS passed the Federal IV-E audit.

- *Other items on the horizon: Future budget discussions, and upcoming CFSR in June 2010.*

QIC Successes

Rick Smith, Facilitator Representatives from QICs

Rick talked about how often the QICs are mentioned in the Sustainability Report. . The report identifies strengths of the QICs, along with areas of challenges. The Performance Milestone Plan explained the purpose of the QICs, which we went over at our last summit. Once there is no longer a court monitor in place, the QICs will take over this role. Rick also stressed the increasing import of the QICs after Court Oversight is terminated. Each member of the QIC panel spoke briefly about their committees' successes, with discussion from the other summit participants.

Chantel Markel, chair from the Southwest/Washington QIC.

- *A Success Night that has helped with employee retention.*
- *Most of their members are QCR trained and are becoming lead reviewers.*
- *Member retention.*
- *Subcommittee involvement in shelter issues and kinship care.*
- *Respectful committee members.*
- *Support of DCFS.*
- *Native American liaison participation on the committee.*
- *Dealing with real issues and not just data (i.e., unaccepted referrals, the Transition to Adult Living [TAL] program, and requirements of kinship care).*

Chris Chytraus, chair from the Salt Lake Valley QIC.

- *Membership has doubled by eliminating DCFS members and increasing membership of community partners.*
- *Second year of Heart of Gold awards.*
- *Recommendation to DCFS for employee salaries and retention.*
- *Placement stability was addressed, and the committee is forming a task force to help match children to families.*
- *Committee is helping with congregate care issues.*
- *Committee selected focusing on TAL youth as one of their top priorities.*

Karen Buchi, member of the State QIC.

- *Over the last year, the State QIC focused on drug-endangered newborns and children and the DCFS responses across the state to a drug-endangered newborn. A subcommittee was formed that created training and has been presenting that information across the state.*
- *DCFS is a responsive agency and has been great to work with.*

Boni Seals, member of the Eastern/Price QIC.

- *Eastern has been successful at keeping a consumer on the committee.*
- *Drug testing and budget concerns were identified as issues the QIC wanted to focus on.*

Dan Grinder, member and Wendy Bunnell, chair of the Western QIC.

- *At the last summit, they had sent a letter of recommendation to DCFS and were waiting for a response. The response was received and recommendations were considered and implemented. It was great to see this system work.*
- *Strength in having a member with a business background (Dan).*
- *Resources for supporting foster parents were not adequate throughout the region. The number of foster parents has risen with help from this committee.*
- *Jared Osmond, member of the QIC, donated his services to create a Public Services Announcement for use by DCFS.*

Brenda Durtschi, Chair of the Northern QIC.

- *Member commitment has been accomplished by having members actively participate in the QCRs.*
- *Created a subcommittee to focus on permanency and finding kin for placements.*
- *Received a donation and pledge for employee time from community partners to assist in locating caregivers.*
- *QIC has been functioning for several years, with a very low turnover.*

Rick led an idea exchange and discussion:

- *Committee diversity. Ideas included: Be respectful of culture; contact local school district; eliminate barriers such as travel distance; recruit former clients who are interested in working with DCFS; give consumers choice of how they want to be introduced; and utilize immersions to recruit membership. QIC members talked about recruiting consumers in other forums, and brainstormed how to recruit more consumers to QIC ; ask members who are leaving to help with a replacement.*
- *Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirements (system review of CPS). The QICs receive their funding through a CAPTA grant. The QICs are expected to serve as the citizen review of CPS programs and issues. Each QIC is required to review CPS data and issues at least once per quarter. QIC members explained that they have reviewed unaccepted referrals; received training on the CPS program area and the Intake process; and reviewed recidivism data.*
- *Incorporating Foster Care Citizen Review Board (FCCRB) members into QICs. DCFS will provide each QIC with a list of FCCRB members in their area; QICs are encouraged to recruit these knowledgeable and dedicated volunteers for the QICs.*
- *Mental Health Center participation on QICs. Carbon County has a member from the local Mental Health Center and has asked their local county commission for funding*
- *Consistent continuum of placement opportunities in each region. Lack of resources in many areas of the state is a concern; and it was suggested that volunteers become involved in the foster parent recruitment process.*

- *Information sharing. Create newsletter or utilize QIC website; provide more detailed information on the QIC website; have a chat room available on QIC website.*
- *Transition to Adult Living mentoring program. Brainstormed and shared information about programs for Adolescent youth. Suggestions included: Mirror program in Salt Lake Valley Region; and Christmas Box International began a new program called “Life Start”, which provides life kits and mentoring to youth transitioning out of care - this is spreading throughout the state.*
- *Discussion of kinship care: Valuable resource in kin caregivers; recruit kin caregivers and their family members for participation on QICs.*
- *Get input and recruit membership from Youth Councils and school districts.*
- *Use Sustainability Report to identify areas that need added focus by QICs and follow-up with DCFS. The Child Welfare Group (CWG) will be contacted and asked whether they consent to putting Sustainability Report on the DCFS/Department of Human Services (DHS) website.*

DCFS Updates

Patti VanWagoner
Linda Wininger

- *Patti expressed her gratitude to the QICs and the great work they have done around child welfare in Utah. She explained how the feedback received from the QICs has helped make changes at DCFS. When the new Federal Adam Walsh Act was enacted, it created delays in placing children with kin due to licensing issues. The QICs brought the problems of children being placed in shelter care for long periods of time to the attention of DCFS, which resulted in the congregate care workgroup being created and solutions being reached. This also helped in modifying Utah laws to enable preliminary placements with kin instead of shelter placements. This new practice was implemented in June and has shown improvements in practice and keeping children with their families. The State QIC also helped focus on providing supports for kin caregivers. Rhett Fronk from the Christmas Box House in Ogden commented that they are seeing less children going into shelter care. Carol Baumann stated that foster parents have stepped up to take care of children who are removed from their biological homes. Patti stated that the QICs have played a vital role in improving services to children and families in Utah.*
- *Linda presented a detailed summary of the CWG Sustainability Report that was filed in the Federal Court David C. case. The five areas the report focuses on are: transparency of DCFS, functionality of QICs, system performance as measured by the CPR and QCRs, Practice Model training process, and financial support. The final statement of the report states that sustainability requirements have been met with continued focus on maintaining the progress that has been achieved. Linda also summarized the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process. Linda explained that the Federal CFSR was postponed until 2010 per the request of the Federal Government. She will integrate all of the information presented today into the statewide assessment as part of the Federal CFSR, and will also visit the QICs to gather more information for this purpose. She asked that QIC members participate on the Federal CFSR.*

- *It was asked what supports are available for parents who have had their children removed. The group discussed this, and peer parenting was suggested as a service that parents use for this purpose.*

Utah Drug Endangered Children

What can be developed in your community? Marjean Searcy

Marjean Searcy, from the Salt Lake City Police Department gave a presentation about the Drug Endangered Children (DEC) multi-disciplinary collaboration in Utah and reported on a non-profit organization being created to continue the collaboration. There will be a more in-depth presentation on December 3 at the Salt Lake County Police Department, and anyone can attend.

Liz Sollis, Public Information Officer for DHS, presented a history of and information about the Utah Methamphetamine Joint Task Force. Several subcommittees were formed from this task force to address this epidemic. Community involvement and support is very important in helping people recover from drug abuse.

Suggestions for how QICs can help with the DEC effort:

- *Get with Katy Larsen or Marjean to help with planning for the DEC effort.*
- *Participate with other groups that are part of the DEC effort.*
- *Involve other drug endangered children initiatives with the DEC effort.*

Wrap Up

Kerri Burns

Challenge: Take the information you received today to your committees and decide what to focus on for the upcoming year. There were 83 attendees at today's event.